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UA letting ex-KGB, CIA agent go

By Chip Warren
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Saying he is a valuable asset to the University of Arizona, students and colleagues of a visiting professor who once was a Soviet KGB agent have mounted a campaign to keep him in the faculty.

But UA officials said yesterday that it is unlikely Vladimir Sakharov will be allowed to stay beyond this semester because of a lack of funding for his position.

Sakharov, who defected to the United States in 1972 and became a CIA agent, was hired by the UA in January to teach two courses in the political science department and one in continuing education.

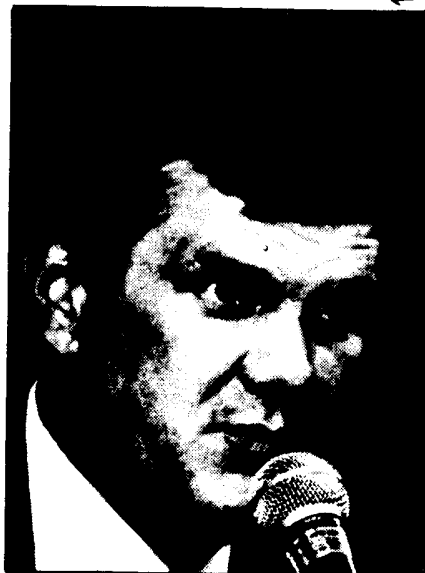
Since students learned that he would not be retained on the faculty this fall, they have circulated a petition urging the UA administration to reverse its decision.

"I doubt very seriously if there was a person in any of his three classes who didn't sign it," said student Richard Humphries, who called Sakharov an "excellent teacher — one of the best I've ever had."

Student Kathy Anavy said, "He brings to the classroom something that students can't be taught out of books. . . . He's an unbelievable asset to the university."

She cited the publicity the UA gets from Sakharov's frequent appearances on national TV to discuss the Soviet Union.

Nils Hasselmo, UA senior vice presi-



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Vladimir N. Sakharov

dent for academic affairs and provost, said Sakharov's appointment was always meant to be temporary. He could not be hired permanently unless the UA went through "normal recruitment procedures" to meet equal-employment-opportunity guidelines.

Myles Brand, dean of the social and behavioral science faculty, added that Sakharov's position became available only this semester because private funds were raised to pay about half his salary.

The UA is "already fully committed in terms of visiting appointments for next year" and can't afford to allocate extra

money for Sakharov's retention, Brand said.

"I appreciate the fact that he attracts the students' attention," Brand said, but added that a higher priority must be given to staffing courses which meet graduation requirements for political science majors.

A contrary opinion came from John Garrard, head of the Russian and Slavic languages department, who was instrumental in bringing Sakharov to the UA.

"All of our efforts should be directed to exposing students and people in the Tucson community to the very best minds . . . with knowledge of the Soviet Union," he said. "The Chernobyl nuclear disaster brings that home very forcefully."

Garrard said the federally supported Institute for the Study of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which he directs, could possibly afford to pay part of Sakharov's salary next year. But he said the UA would have to come up with the rest.

Sakharov said he found the efforts being made on his behalf "most rewarding," but added that he didn't "want to impose myself on the university," even though he'd like to remain in Tucson.

"It's very upsetting to my family, basically," he said. "I'm not somebody who can be kicked around, and this is the first time I am being pushed around like a piece of meat."

"The administration is just not interested in quality teaching of students in Soviet politics and foreign politics — that's the assumption I have to make."